

Peggy *and* Patty ;

OR,

THE SISTERS

OF

ASHDALE.

VOL. I.

11
Peggy and Patty:



THE SISTERS

OF

ASHDALE

VOL. I

Peggy and Patty;

OR,

THE SISTERS

OF

ASHDALE.

THE SECOND EDITION.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY,
PALL-MALL.

M.DCC.LXXXIV.

Peggy and Patty;

OR

THE SISTERS



THE SECOND EDITION

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. I.

LONDON

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON,
RUE-MAIL

W. L. G. 1840

ADVERTISEMENT.

To the READER.

"I Hate apologies"—(says a sensible author) "for if you have written well, there needs none;—and if ill, they will be of little service."—Yet the writer of the following history cannot submit it to the public eye, without desiring the candid reader to observe, the style is intended to be rather affecting than pompous;—the sentiments flowing from the heart,—and rather warmly expressive, than coldly correct.

The excellent Author of the Spectator observes, that one peruses a book with double delight, when we know who or what the writer is.—He pleasantly remarks, some readers are so very curious in this particular “ that they even “ wish to know, if a work was “ written by a married man, or a “ bachelor ;—whether in London, or “ the country ;—whether by the desire “ of a friend, or to amuse an idle “ hour :—nay, even if the author was “ a brown, or a black man ;—tall, or “ short, &c. &c.” If the reader should entertain a wish to know who or what the writer of this little work is,—suffice it to say, a woman ;—but whether a maid, wife, or widow ;—

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whether

*whether fair or brown—tall or short ;
 —whether it was written for a dinner,
 or a new gown,—is of no great importance. She is convinced, the moral that
 may be drawn from the following sheets
 can never be too much inculcated ;—
 being ultimately designed to warn the
 young, the unprotected, inexperienced
 part of the female world, to avoid the
 fatal effects of a too easy belief, and rash
 credulity ; to excite the tear of pity for
 injured innocence ; to reprobate vice in
 its certain path to misery ; and to
 recommend those virtues which are
 alone,*

“ Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss.”

PEGGY AND PATTY.

LETTER I.

Ashdale in Cumberland,
May 21

DEAR EMMA,

WHEN Patty and I parted with you last night, at the stile in the copse that leads to the little wood by the side of the valley, we still pursued the subject, that we told you was uppermost in our hearts, and in which you so much

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agree

agree with us ; namely, our desiring our parents to write to a cousin-german they have in London (and who is Patty's godmother) to enquire among her acquaintance for some creditable, little establishment for us (such as waiting on a lady, &c.) that so we might be able to earn a decent livelihood, without being any longer such a burthen, as I am sure we must be, to our poor father :—indeed—indeed, Emma, it grieves both your Peggy and Patty to the soul, to think what a helpless little family he has to provide for ;—and all upon the scanty pittance of a curacy of thirty pounds

per annum:—for which sum he is to walk over the bleak moors, eight miles (as he has, you know, two churches to serve) every Sunday. In short, my sister and I, being now arrived at the age of sixteen and seventeen, can no longer bear to loiter away our time here (where we must still add to the expences of the family) when we might be so much more profitably employed; and perhaps at the year's end, my Emma, be able from our industrious earnings to send down a small trifle to our dear parents.—Patty and I never closed our eyes last night, for thinking of this jour-

ney, and of the advantages that may arise from it.—We have had a good education, as to reading the best English authors, writing, and being, as you know, well instructed in needle-work :—the latter by our mother, and the former by my poor father, who you must remember formerly kept a little school in the next village ; which joined with his curacy, enabled him to live more plentifully than he has since done.—But alas ! that dreadful fit of illness he had last winter (which drove us to such extremities, that my excellent mother was obliged to part with her chief apparel to pro-

cure the best of husbands some comfortable nourishment towards his recovery) that illness, Emma, I repeat, was our ruin :—but come, let us hope the best :—this journey to London will, I hope, produce something in our favour.

Our cousin Bennet lives in a very handsome manner, and doubtless must be acquainted with families of good fashion: for my part, I have no objection to attend an elderly lady (for you know I can bear confinement) nay, to wait either on one or more children, is an employment I should be much pleased with :—our hands, my dear friend,

disdain not labour.—What delight shall I have, and so will my beloved Patty, to send our poor mother now and then a new gown;—and every year some useful cloathing, for a present, to my little sisters.—My brother George, I hope, may yet live to visit England;—and it may please the Almighty Disposer of all events to send him home in such circumstances as may be the making of us all: I was so very young, when a worthy gentleman in this county carried him over to Bengal with him as a writer, that I do not in the least remember his person:—I only remember, in
former

former days, how my little heart used to throb with anxious fear, when, sitting round our peat fire, in the winter evenings, I used to desire my father to tell about (whilst I shuddered to hear it) the lions, the tygers, and the frightful black people (as I then thought they were) where *poor* George was gone.

You told us, my Emma, yesterday, that you are going soon to your uncle Waller's at Carlisle:—so that, was this journey of ours even not to take place, you see we should lose you.—How should Patty and I support your absence, were we to remain longer in this coun-

try? — Not a tree, under whose shade we have so often sat and sung together, or played in our careless infancy, but would remind us of our loss : — but now perhaps we shall set out much about the same time — and then we will write, my Emma ! — be sure let us write by every opportunity : — but this moment I am called away to assist my mother in some little family business. — Heaven bless you ! — I must now conclude ; — and believe us both, for my sister will sign this as well as myself, to be

Your unalterable friends,

Peggy and Patty Summers.

P. S. Sorry

P. S. Sorry am I to say that the little goldfinch I intended to keep for your sake, and which you brought us yesterday, died this morning, in my bosom.

As soon as we have *broke the ice* about our London journey, we will write again.

LETTER II.

The same, to the same.

Ashdale, Monday.

EVERY thing, my dear Emma, goes on towards our London journey, as our hearts can wish,—During these last three weeks you have

have been at Carlisle, my beloved father has written to our Cousin Bennet, on the affair which engrosses our whole thoughts; and has received a very kind answer. She is a good woman, and a sincere friend; and has not the least doubt of our soon being settled in some respectable family:—till which we are to remain with her, or her eldest daughter (lately married:)—how thankful are we to Providence for the great prospect we have of being, as I may say, now in all likelihood provided for, during the remainder of our days.

Patty and I are as busy as bees,

in

in making up a neat cap or two ;—
finery, you know, my Emma, is
 out of the question with us.—My
 poor little sister Nancy has just now
 affected me with her kindness—her
 godmother lately gave her some
 ribbons, and other little matters ;—
 these she has just now brought us, and
 insists on our taking to ourselves :
 —“You shall” (cried she, throwing
 her arms round my neck) “have
 “ these, and my best frock into the
 “ bargain ; it will make something,
 “ to go to London.”—“Poor child”
 (said my dear mother, wiping a
 fond tear from her pale cheek)
 “ thou knowest not what a place
 “ this

"this London is."—Emma, I shall be sadly hurt when the time comes, after all, to part from our beloved parents, and these poor little things, my brothers and sisters.—Tommy will give me his buckles out of his shoes (being silver, the present of his uncle)—and Lucy, not five years old, is crying that she has nothing to give us.

You must—indeed, Emma, you must come over to Ashdale (we will meet you at the old stile in the copse) and stay with us the night before our departure. I often, *happy* as I am about this journey, cannot help sighing:—but, as our
good

good father tells us, there can be no real happiness in this world without some alloy.—Patty laughs at me when I sigh; but you know she is a little madcap, and has charming spirits.

Do, my dear, come to us as soon as you can:—and believe me, always,

Your true and affectionate

Peggy Summers.

P. S. As I know you love to hear all you can of our London journey, I have enclosed a copy of my father's letter to our cousin, and also her answer. I had almost forgot to tell you, how lucky Patty and I shall

shall be in having good Mrs. Carter go with us as far as Carlisle, from which place her married daughter, who is going to London, will go with us the whole journey from Carlisle—is not this a lucky circumstance?

L E T T E R III.

*Mr. Summers to Mrs. Bennet,
(enclosed in the preceding.)*

Athdale, Cumberland.

GOOD COUSIN,

YOU will find, on the perusal of this, that I have not forgot the many kind professions you made

made my wife and me in your letter last year, relative to being of some service to my poor unprovided family :—indeed, I am now going to give you the greatest proof an old fond father (as I am) can give, in begging you to take my two eldest daughters under your protection ; and to look out for them, in some family of your acquaintance, for a little industrious employment, as you shall see most proper.—They are good children, and have been always kept to habits of industry :—they both (if their fond mother is not blinded by her tender partiality) are very expert

pert at their needle ; and I have
 taken care from their early years
 to instruct them in their religious
 duties—in reading the best authors,
 and in writing :—thus have they
 had a plain, and I hope an useful
 education. The shewy accomplish-
 ments, as music, dancing, &c. they
 are entirely ignorant of. Their dis-
 positions are mild and good :—
 Peggy, my eldest child, is of rather
 a more sedate turn of mind than my
 little lively Patty, who is however
 equally good and dutiful. The for-
 mer would make an excellent at-
 tendant (being fond of reading,
 and can bear confinement) to some
 old.

old lady ; and the latter a very proper companion to a young one ;— but I pretend not, my dear cousin, to prescribe to you in this matter, as to the situation you may think most proper for each, as no one can know the world better than yourself, or be more proper to conduct two such young creatures, as my Peggy and Patty, into it. My poor wife and myself shall hourly pray for every blessing to attend you, for your great and real friendship :— friendship indeed ! my cousin—for, alas ! *times* have been dreadfully bad with us.—My old rheumatic complaints have returned last win-

ter, and been (for I was laid up near five months) the ruin of us:—my little garden, from which we drew our chief subsistence, has failed, owing to my long want of inspecting it; and we had also the very great misfortune of losing our cow: this all together has been too much for us;—but I will be patient—I will be resigned, my cousin, under whatever it may please Heaven to inflict.—The truly devout soul can never be deprived of the comforts of religious aids, that has a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.

If our hopes (as to our precious children,

children, we entrust, dearest Madam, to you) are favoured with your approbation, we have most luckily heard of a neighbour, who has a daughter (a married, sedate woman) who will take the care of my children quite from Carlisle to London; — a very fortunate circumstance!

My most affectionate regards to your worthy husband, my old school-fellow:—pray tell him, times are strangely altered with me, since those happy days: I question if he could even recollect his colleague, poor Ned Summers, in an old flouched hat and thread-bare

coat, digging in his garden.—Excuse my scrawl, which I must now conclude, with my wife's and my kindest love and respects to you both, and heartily wishing you the continuance of every blessing.

I remain (in expectation of your approving letter to our proposal, which we hope you will either *pardon* or *grant*)

Dear, good Cousin,
Your very obliged and
affectionate kinsman,

Edward Summers.

P. S. My wife will take the liberty of sending by the girls a pot of very fine honey (the produce of
our

our little garden) — of which we beg your acceptance.—The above dear woman, I grieve to say, breaks daily :—my illness was too much for her to go through ;—and from a constant complaint in her breast, I fear—alas ! my cousin, I fear a cancerous disorder will be the consequence :—but pray say nothing of this to the two children — as they would be unhappy in the knowledge of it.

I live in hopes yet of embracing my son George before I die.—If my worthy cousin could send me down a few news-papers, in which are any tidings from Bengal, it

would rejoice our hearts, as our remote distance from the Capital makes us often remain in ignorance how the world goes. Adieu.

LETTER IV.

*Mrs. Bennet to the Rev. Mr. Summers;
(enclosed with the preceding.)*

London.

MY GOOD COUSIN,

WITH sincere pleasure I received your truly kind letter; in which you entrust me with the care of your two dear daughters.— Believe me, when I assure you, with the greatest truth, I shall not only

only receive them with an unfeigned pleasure, but will in all respects treat them, whilst under my roof, with the same tendernefs as my own children:—and I have not the leaft doubt but that I fhall very foon meet with an eftablifhment for both, equal to their and your moft fanguine wifhes. — I am the more likely to fucceed in this matter, as our eldeft daughter (Harriet) about a fortnight fince, was married to a merchant in the city, of very large fortune, whose fifter, a maiden lady of an exemplary character, w
I am certain, be glad to receive juft fuch a young perfon to be her com-

panion as my cousin Peggy : neither have I a doubt, but that among us we shall equally well provide for your lively Patty, as you call her : but till they are provided for, my two unmarried daughters (much of their age) will rejoice, as well as myself, to have them with us. — Mr. Bennet at this moment looks over my shoulder, and bids me add on his part, that the children of his old friend Ned Summers, will be ever dear to him as to myself : — he often wishes for a moment of your sweet air in Cumberland, whilst from his profession he is obliged to be for ever poring

over

over dull musty parchments, deeds, and settlements. — You give us great concern, my much-esteemed cousin, in the account you give of your own health, and that of your most valuable wife: but in the midst of our compassion, do you know that Mr. Bennet and I are downright angry with you both, that you would not inform us of your late melancholy situation? — Why, my good kinsman, would you not make use of that friendship we have so often proffered to you? — Indeed, you are too delicately scrupulous in this matter. — I know there is a dignity in distress, which
will

will often sooner suffer in silence than implore relief;—but surely to us, my friend, you might have disclosed the melancholy recital. I hope your tender fears for good Mrs. Summers are groundless:—I will, however, consult the most eminent surgeons we have, and send you their opinion.

But now for a delightful subject, which is the happy account we have heard of your son George, from a gentleman, our relation, just returned from Bengal; he tells us, he has made a large fortune, and that he has gained the esteem of all who know him, from the merit of his

his conduct on all occasions; and that there were the greatest hopes of his soon arriving in England: on which happy news I heartily congratulate you.—I shall expect the precious charge with which you entrust me, as soon as possible:—the direction you will be very exact in, Mr. Bennet's, N^o 2, Hatton-street, Holborn. The safest way will be, as soon as they arrive in London, where the coach sets up, to dispatch a messenger to me; and our servant and our chariot shall immediately attend them.

I enclose a bank note of ten pounds, for the purpose of defray-
 ing

ing the journey to London of my amiable young cousins.—Mr. Bennet has sent an enormous bundle of pamphlets and news-papers, to let you see how the world goes on; and I have enclosed in the parcel two pounds of best green tea, of which I beg Mrs. Summers' acceptance:—and, wishing you both all happiness, I remain

Your real friend, and
affectionate kinswoman,

Sarah Bennet.

Mr. Bennet sends love.

LETTER

LETTER V.

Miss Emma Harvey, to Miss Waller.

Moss Hill, Cumberland.

LUCY, my dear Lucy, wonder not to see my paper blotted with tears ;—they are gone !—My poor Peggy and Patty set out this morning for the great city of London ;—yes—the dear companions of my early infancy, to this present moment, are gone, perhaps for ever.—How *selfish*, my friend, will you call this anxiety of mine, when this journey will be, in all probability, so much for the advantage of not only the
 dear

dear girls, but most likely the whole family :—and yet, Lucy, I felt a pang I cannot express—I even shuddered when my sweet Peggy, for the last time, pressed me to her heart.—I slept with them (as I could not tear myself away) yesterday evening.—Slept, did I say?—alas! we never closed our eyes :—Patty, my lively Patty, was all prate—she has charming spirits :—my Peggy I thought seemed more affected with this separation.—The parting this morning was sad indeed!—the best of fathers and of men, Mr. Summers, called the dear girls into his little study,

study, where I believe a very tender scene ensued,—as when he came out to us, his eyes were red with weeping. — Mrs. Summers looked tenderly upon him — “What! my
 “ love” (said that amiable woman)
 “ you would not give them your
 “ blessing and advice before me,
 “ lest the solemn scene should too
 “ much affect me?”—Here Mrs. Carter (whom you know). arrived in a chaise she had borrowed for the purpose of conveying her and my young friends to Carlisle; from which town they have taken places in the coach for to-morrow.—The little children, who had been peep-
 ing

ing out every moment for a sight of the carriage, now cried out—
 “ The chaise is come !—the chaise
 “ is come !—but indeed Peggy and
 “ Patty shall not go ;”—clinging
 round the necks of each—“ Mam-
 “ ma they never — never — will
 “ come back again—indeed they
 “ will not,”—(said these little in-
 nocents, weeping bitterly.)—Mrs.
 Carter was for kindly hurrying
 them away at once :—but the ten-
 der Mrs. Summers exclaimed,—
 “ Let me have one more parting
 “ embrace—I may perhaps have
 “ never”—she clasped her mater-
 nal arms round the beloved girls,
 3 whilst

whilst Peggy fainted on her bosom—being removed into the air, she soon recovered.—We then took a last adieu—and drew towards the little gate that leads into the road, when, what was wonderfully affecting; a number of young maidens, the former schoolfellows (in the next village) of my sweet friends, were all assembled to take a last farewell; “God bless you both!” was echoed from every mouth.—One presented a nosegay,—another, what is called a *keep-sake*,—another, a few little cakes, &c. —Peggy, Patty, and I, *looked unutterable* things, for we could not *speak*.—

Mrs. Carter got them at last into the chaise,—when the poor father once more caught their hands, and holding them to his heart, with a look I shall never forget,—“ My “ children,”—(said he, faltering) “ may the Almighty :—remember “ —be virtuous—and be”—happy —he would have said, but the chaise that moment drove off.— Lucy, never shall I forget the sound of the parting wheels ;—the *lessening* distant sound seemed to die upon the ear :—we *listened* as long as there was a possibility of hearing the smallest *sound* of these wheels on the gravelly hill (which you

I

well

well know) and then we piteously looked at each other, as much as to say, "Are they gone for ever?"

Mr. Summers, with a mournful tone of voice he could not conceal, and a parental tear down his venerable cheek he could not suppress, kindly asked me, "if I would not "return into the house."—I held up my hand, but could not speak,—and with slow and melancholy steps bent my course homewards. When I gained the summit of the hill, I thought perhaps I should have seen, though at a distance, the carriage in the valley—but it was *gone*.—Lucy, there is some-

thing wonderfully affecting in being *left* by those we love;—it certainly is much more sensibly felt by the remaining party at home, than by the travellers themselves. — The thousand objects that present to them—the change of place, &c. &c.—all justify my assertion:—whilst the poor friend that stays at home, has nothing to prevent the constant idea of those they have just parted from.—I felt as if I had just lost a limb. — Well! — to proceed;—I fauntered home; but, alas! in passing through the little copse where my sweet girls and I have spent so many hours, I sat
down

down on the stile, and gave way to a violent burst of weeping;—this relieved my spirits more than any thing.—My parents had been waiting dinner some time; and my father (who, though good in the main, as he is, is certainly of a *rough* disposition) accosted me, not in the gentlest manner — “ So, Emma, “ you are come at last!—What! “ with your eyes as red as *ferrets*! “ — What a blubbering is here betwixt my wife and you!”—(my poor mother, who is, you know, as gentle and mild as my father is otherwise, had been weeping too, I found, on the departure of the dear

girls, of whom she is very fond)

—"What nonsense," (cried my fa-

ther) "is all this to-do?—and for

" what, I should be glad to know?

" —Why because the *very* thing is

" now come to pass for which ye

" have all been wishing this twelve-

" month.—Here it was, last winter,

" *Poor Mr. Summers will be ruined—*

" *must be starved with such a family—*

" and then the rich cousins were

" blamed for not doing any thing

" for them:—Well!—Is not every

" thing now as heart can wish?—

" the girls (and good girls they

" are) are now sent for to Lon-

" don;—parson Summers, who I

" love

“ love as I do my eyes, has told me
 “ all;—and now, I say, these kind
 “ *Londoners* have taken the girls,
 “ and they are going to be made
 “ for life, what a whining and
 “ sighing is here!—were they laid
 “ in their coffins and carried to
 “ their graves, more grief, I am cer-
 “ tain, could not be shewn on the
 “ occasion:—but the best joke of
 “ all is, your mother here had a
 “ *dream* last night;—and she is
 “ sure she shall never see them
 “ again.” ——“ Dear sir,” (said I)
 “ how can you be so cruel? You
 “ know how I have loved the poor
 “ girls from earliest infancy—I

“ wish — I wish — I was with
“ them !”

The dinner being now removed,
and my father having lighted up
his pipe, began to be in better hu-
mour : — “ Emma, come hither,
“ child ; kiss me.” — (pulling me
on his knee) — “ Where is your
“ *fortitude* and your *firmness*, if you
“ thus *whimper* without occasion ?
“ — rather down on your knees
“ this moment, and thank God the
“ girls are provided for.” — “ Ah !
“ sir,” (said I) “ thankful I am : but
“ — yet I fear I know not what. —
“ As to *fortitude* and *firmness*, as you
“ call it ; to be sure those words
7 “ found

“found well,—but when the trial
 “comes, how hard is”—“Child,”
 (said my father, after taking a long
 whiff of his pipe) “*fortitude*, and
 “the *command of our passions*, is the
 “noblest—the best—and the”—
 Whilst my worthy parent was going
 on with his harangue on his *perfect*
command of the passions, our man
 Peter entered, with a face as long
 as my arm, with the bad tidings
 that my father’s favourite mare had
 staked herself:—unluckily, poor
 man, at that moment he forgot his
fortitude and *firmness*; for, starting
 up (so far from having the com-
 mand of *his* passions) “D——n!”

ho

he cried, — down went his pipe, bottle, and glasses, into a thousand shivers,—and in a most excessive rage he sallied forth, to vent his passion on the man, who had put the unfortunate mare into a wrong field, it seems. — Ah! my poor father, thought I, how clever, to sit in your easy chair after a plentiful meal, and to preach up *fortitude* and *firmness*, where the *heart* is *untouched*; but where *it is*, how difficult, alas! those *trying* virtues.

My dear mother complaining of a pain in her head, I retired with her to her chamber, where from the windows we saw my father fretting

ting and fuming in the fields among his men.—“My poor Mr. Harvey,” (said my excellent mother, in her calm, mild manner) “will be quite “ill with this excess of his passion.” —“Ah!” replied I, “what is *his* “loss in comparison of *mine*; — “but preaching and practice are”— I was running on, and I believe rather *pertly*, when my mother interrupted me — “Emma! remember, child, you are speaking of “your father; — we have all our “foibles, — and possibly this in “him may be constitutional; — “he is a worthy man as ever “lived.”

“But,

“But, my dear madam,” (said I)
 “pray what was your dream last
 “night, about my poor Peggy
 “and Patty?”—“I shall not in-
 “deed repeat it,” (returned she)
 “Heaven grant the dear children—
 “(whom I love as my own) every
 “blessing!—Mrs. Bennet is a good
 “woman, I have seen her former-
 “ly; — all will turn out for the
 “best, I doubt not.”

Lucy, what could this dream
 of my mother's be? Was it not
 strange she would not tell me?

Have I told you — No, I think
 not—that a most happy account is
 arrived in England of Mr. Sum-
 mers's

mers's eldest son, who has been many years in the East Indies? Mrs. Bennet writes this. I hope he will return rich, and be a comfort to his dear parents.

Adieu! my friend.—Heigh-ho! poor Peggy and Patty! you are now some miles on your long journey.—Pray write; which will be a comfort to the present drooping spirits of

Your very affectionate

Emma Harvey.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

*Peggy Summers to Mr. and Mrs.
Summers.*

Carlisle,
Monday Afternoon.

MY DEAR PARENTS,

I HAVE the satisfaction to acquaint you we got safe to this place; and Patty and I are both well, and endeavour all we can to keep up our spirits; and as this journey will prove so much to our advantage, we have great hopes you will reconcile yourselves the better to our separation. — I am sorry I am obliged to say we have met with

with a little disappointment, in that we shall not be able to have the company of Mrs. Harris (Mrs. Carter's daughter) to London; she very unluckily being taken last night with a violent cholic; — an inflammation in her bowels is coming on; and Mr. Harris has sent for a physician, who says she is in great danger, as she is, it seems, breeding. We got here about noon, but found the family in the greatest confusion, and Mr. Harris in sad grief for this unhappy affair. — A messenger was dispatched, it seems, to good Mrs. Carter, before day-break this morning, to fetch her over,

over, but by some accident he did not arrive at her village till after we were set out:—She, poor good woman, cries sadly—it grieves my heart to hear her:—indeed no one thinks her daughter will live, as she was seized so violently.—We are very sorry to acquaint you with this affair; but as our places are taken in the stage-coach, if we don't go we shall lose all that money; to be sure we are very troubled Mrs. Harris cannot go with us, but as that is impossible, we must do as well as we can. There is no fear but we shall have some company in the coach: Mr. Harris says it is always full, so
do

do not fear, my dear parents, that we shall go this long journey quite alone.

As soon as we get to London you may depend on our writing; and you may as much depend, my beloved father, on our *treasuring up* in *our hearts* the excellent advice you gave us in the little study this morning:—I still seem to *feel* my dear mother's *parting tears* on my cheek. — Farewell; as we must now conclude, for farmer Grove, who is going your way, waits to carry this letter, and says you shall have it to-morrow. Pray do not be over-concerned that Mrs. Harris

cannot go with us, as there is no doubt but we shall have company in the coach.

With our duty to our honoured parents, and love to the children, we remain

Your ever obedient,

loving, dutiful daughters,

Peggy and Patty Summers.

Mrs. Carter is almost distracted, as her poor daughter has just had a convulsion fit—the surgeon is run to fetch again the physician.—Pray desire little Nancy not to take our journey so much to heart.—Once more farewell!

LETTER

LETTER VII.

*Captain Jackall * to Lord Racket.*

Ferry-Bridge, Yorkshire.

MY GOOD LORD,

I WISH it were in my power to give a happy account of the business I had the honour of negotiating

* This *worthy* personage had no *real* title to the honourable rank of captain, it being only a nick name given him by a set of gamblers and men of pleasure about town, of whom he led the gang: this contemptible libertine had run through a genteel fortune in every vice and debauchery, and was now reduced to the most wretched of all occupations, that of being a pimp—a pander—to the profligate great; sometimes

tiating for your lordship at York races;—but I have had de——sh bad luck :—I picked up the first day a cool five hundred in betts, and the other *little* matter your lordship entrusted me with—but lost it all next morning.—I sent word by Jerry, that Slimskin was beat hollow, and that Miss Spider-catcher lost both heats.—His Grace and Lord * * * had indeed damnable luck;—curse them and their jockeys, say I ————. But, my times the drunken companion of their midnight revels; and as often *kicked* out of company—sometimes employed to *get* in their gambling debts, or to look out for a fresh *prey*.

dear

dear lord, I hope the good success
I have had in *other* matters will be
a sufficient compensation for the
whole string of plagues and misfor-
tunes I met with at York races.—

“ The bloom of opening flowers,
“ Softness, and sweetest innocence they
“ wear,
“ And look like nature in the world’s
“ first spring.”

But I rave,—and so would any
man, to meet with what I have
done—

“ So young !—so fair !—so innocent !—
“ so sweet !”—

They are food for Jove, egad !——
Your lordship will pardon my pre-

sent incoherence of style, I flatter myself, when I relate the cause of it.—But to lead to it in some kind of order:—When I left London, the commands I had the *honour* to receive were (after the York business was finished) to take a tour into the adjacent northern counties; to look at some horses and some pointers; and at parting, my good lord, you may remember, with a *squeeze* of the hand, your lordship desired I would look out for a little northern girl or two, that was fresh and fair.—In the first article, the *horses*, I have had but middling luck:—I have however purchased
a poney

a poney of pretty figure, whose dam was Miss Slammaken (that won every thing at Nottingham last year) whose grand-dam was [Merope — whose grand-grand-dam was Cleopatra;— and whose grand-grand-*fire* was Otho.—Horse-flesh in general runs high this year.——But now for the *dogs* :—I have only purchased three little bitches, who promise to turn out as fine pointers as any in your lordship's possession of the kind; not a single hound did I meet with to please me.——But for the last article,—the *girls* !—I think I have now pleased your lordship; if *man* can be pleased. I have been for

these last six days rambling about the west-riding of Yorkshire, and then into Cumberland, to see if I could find any little *tits* worth picking up; but could meet with nothing in that stile of beauty your lordship likes:—I stopped at a farmhouse or two for the above purpose, but all I met with, damned *fly*, and as ugly as the devil.—At length, finding my innocent labours lost, and my mare slipping her shoulder a few miles on this side Carlisle, I was resolved to get into the first stage-coach I should meet with travelling to London. Having left my mare at a village, to be sent up by the

the waggon, I planted myself at an inn on the road, in expectation of the Carlisle coach, which soon made its appearance; and on my accosting the coachman, "Honest friend, are you quite full?" — "No, sir! — room in plenty," (said the coachman, alighting from his box and opening the door.)—I instantly sprung up the step, and threw myself on the back seat, as the fore seat I saw was occupied by two females; — but, O Heavens! what was my astonishment, when on looking up I beheld two the most beautiful young creatures that nature ever formed, sitting before me: —upon

—upon my soul, my lord, their beauties struck me like a sudden flash of lightning, and I could hardly forbear exclaiming aloud,—“Ye gods and goddesses!”—Description must here fail:—Imagine the blush of opening roses,—imagine the pure unsullied white of lilies, with all the glowing beauties of the spring;—but even these will fall short.—The eldest of these lovely young creatures could be barely seventeen—*sweet seventeen*—tall and full-formed for that early age—with the soft blue eyes of Lucy Collins!—lips of coral—and a neck!—but here imagination fails.

fails. The youngest of these angelic sisters (for sisters they are) is a little lively brunette, about sixteen—a sweet rogue! with eyes so black and piercing that they deal death and destruction at every glance!—cheeks glowing with the carnation bloom—a mouth!—But how can I describe what is *undescribable*? “My stars!” (thought I) “are these two lovely girls travelling by *themselves*?”

As the enchanting eyes of each had been, through a sweet timid bashfulness (on the moment of my seating myself) fixed on the road at the window of the side they

they each sat (not a single glance did they bestow on me:—how unlike our London-bred ladies, who give a man stare for stare!) — I, in silence, from their bewitching faces, cast my eyes on their dress—which was neatness itself:—they were exactly habited alike, in little sprigged night-gowns — the profusion of their fine hair was partly covered by a small pleated quoif, which for whiteness could only be excelled by their charming bosoms, imperfectly concealed by scanty handkerchiefs of decent muslin!—but if I give way to raptures I shall never have done:—a plain little black bonnet

still added to the simplicity of their figure,—and a small bunch of opening rose-buds was placed at their enchanting bosoms, by way of ornament.

From their being unattended, and indeed from rather an awkward (though bewitching) bashfulness in their manner, I at once imagined they were of no very high rank in life:—upon my soul, my lord, there is something in such perfect innocence—that—that—in short, I was perfectly *awe-struck*—yes, devil as I am—I *was*, for a few moments.—Still were the eyes of each charming girl *rivettted* on the side of the road,

road, as if looking at the prospects as we passed. Not a single syllable had as yet transpired. — A professed lover of the sex, as I am, — and as professed a libertine, — I had no small difficulty to avoid taking a hand of each, and to press it to my bosom — or even to clasp them in my arms — I say with difficulty I refrained from this : — but as impudent a young fellow as I avowedly am, I only admired in silence. — How, my good lord, would Kitty Sly, or any of our nymphs at ———'s, laugh to hear this ! But these lovely angels, I soon saw, were not that sort of *girls* that a

man can take liberties with on a sudden acquaintance.—Determined still to feast my eyes in silence for half an hour longer, and to *reconnoitre the ground*, I thought my wisest way would be to *sham* sleep—to *sham* it, I repeat; for I defy any man living to *sleep* in good earnest with two such fine creatures so near him. Accordingly I drew myself up in the corner of the seat whereon I sat, and fetching a long yawn, pulled my hat over my forehead, and partly my eyes, but yet in such a manner, that from squinting slyly under it, I had the fullest view of these enchanting girls, and their every attitude,

tude, the whole time of my pretended nap : in about three minutes I began to breathe hard, as if fallen into a profound sleep (still peering under my hat all the time) when the youngest angel (supposing I was in a deep slumber) in the sweetest tone of voice cried, “ See !—see, “ Peggy, that fine wood and valley, I wish I was walking there.” —“ Softly !—softly, Patty,”—(returned her charming sister) “ you will “ *wake the gentleman !* ”—Sweet girl ! The gentleman, on hearing this tender sentence, in a soft tone, mild as the breath of zephyr, could hardly restrain himself from kissing, at that moment,

moment, those lips of coral from whence the enchanting half-whisper proceeded. — Patty and Peggy ! — what pretty names, my lord ! — I do not remember, in your lordship's *whole list*, any of those names. —

They now entered (believing me in the soundest slumber, for I even snored) into the prettiest *whispering* conversation imaginable, but yet loud enough for me to hear every syllable. — “ I would give the “ world if I had it” (said the dove-eyed Peggy) “ to see what they are “ all doing now at Ashdale :—my “ poor mother, how she wept !” — “ Nay, so did my dear father”

(cried Patty). — “ Well ! of all
 “ things, sure this *parting* from
 “ friends is a very — very great
 “ trial.”——Not a single syllable
 did I lose of this discourse. A deal
 more of their little innocent chat
 passed, in which they discovered the
 most beautiful simplicity—and *total*
ignorance of the world.—I soon
gathered, during my pretended nap,
 that these lovely innocents were
 taking their *first* excursion from
 home—(I will take care it shall be
 their last)—and had just parted from
all their friends. I was in great
 hopes, such was my *vanity*, that
 they would have made a few obser-
 vations

vations on my figure. At that moment I had flung myself into the most captivating attitude, with dishevelled hair hanging carelessly on my glowing cheek:—I had changed my posture, as if sleeping uneasily, and had varied my attitude—I know at that moment I exhibited as fine a figure as any in the kingdom.—But no!—not the least word did I hear concerning my worship.—They now began to be a little chearful:—their smiles, and sallies of rapartee to each other, were captivating beyond all *sufferance*; their hearts still, however,

seemed, from the heavy sighs which escaped them, to be too full of *home* to be quite at ease. I now thought it *high* time to *awake*; when stretching my limbs, — and yaw—yaw——ning, in a kind of careless way, I asked—rubbing my eyes as just awaking—

“Are you for London, ladies, or
“only to the next town?”

On my speaking to them, instantly a blush of the deepest vermilion dye covered at once their lovely cheeks, and even bosoms——

“We are going *quite* to Lon-
“don,” said the sweet Peggy —
in

in a voice inimitably soft. "Good!
 " —thought I—very good—that
 " *quite* to London."—

I now was silent, *purposely*, for a few moments; when, after another yawn, and feeling carelessly in my pockets, I luckily found a few apples.

I offered them to their acceptance;—and with the most simple innocence of manner, yet still blushing, they took one each.

I now began to admire the beauty of the prospects;—but still took care to be devilishly *circumspect*.

After a few common observations I made on the heat of the

weather, I intended, by distant hints, to gather from their bewitching lips to what part of London they were to go, &c. &c.—but, just as I was preparing my question, the coach (devil take it) stopped at an inn on the road, to take up an old coughing woman, who, plague take her, came with us as far as this place, where the coach sleeps this night. —This old cat squatted herself down on my side of the coach, and by her presence prevented the hundred little attentions and questions I had *artfully* been preparing for the lovely girls: — I still however had their enchanting beauties before me; and

and sometimes heard the sound of their sweet voices, as the old woman began talking to them on indifferent subjects.—I was so heartily vexed at her making one in the coach, that I sat sulky in my corner, and never opened my lips till we arrived at this Ferry-bridge.—I handed the two angels into a parlour, and left the old hag to hobble in after us.

The lovely girls are now retired to sleep ;—but the devil fetch me if I can close my eyes—so have been scribbling thus far to your lordship. — I already have set down these fine young creatures as (my

good lord) your *own*:—escape me they shall not; for I will *safely* convey them to the great Town. —In the mean time, if this cursed old woman leaves us (as I hope she will in the morning) I have no doubt of picking out of these two poor simple innocents, who and what they are; — to whom they are going in town, and what are their expectations and connections. — I dispatch this by the post from hence;—and will most undoubtedly write * again from Northampton,

* The innocent reader—*un*-hackneyed in the ways of vice, may perhaps wonder that a second letter should be thought necessary

Northampton, where the coach, it seems, stays all night again. Your lordship, I am convinced, will be *delighted* with *my acquisition*; and will look upon my journey to York races as not entirely lost, as I have picked up on my way back these divine girls.—May they very shortly be in your lordship's possession; for which *desirable* end, be assured,

cessary on the road:—but it must be considered, that the acquisition of a new mistress, young, and exquisitely lovely, as were these *devoted* sisters, is, to such *sensual* wretches as Lord Racket (as it gratifies their darling vice) a matter of most serious consideration; nor will their vile panders think any pains too great, to procure the unhappy victims.

every

every art shall be used, and every
nerve strained, to approve myself,
my good lord,

Your lordship's most obsequious,
faithful, and

devoted servant,

Patrick Jackall.

LETTER VIII.

The same, to the same.

Northampton,

One in the Morn.

MY GOOD LORD,

IF ever man merited a bust to his
memory, for the most happy,
ready invention, mine surely does,

to be stuck up for ages in a niche,
in those temples which the great
often build to perpetuate the me-
mory of worthy personages, illust-
rious for genius, wit, &c. &c.

—O my lord, I am all extacy!
such an *invention* has befriended me!

—such success has attended it!—

But take the following particulars :

The old cat I mentioned to your
lordship, as a *bar* to my proceed-
ings, most luckily left us, after ten
miles farther travel with us, this
morning early.—When we stopped
to breakfast—and where we were
to stay an hour—lest such another
interruption should happen as the
last,

last, I was resolved to “make my
“hay while the sun shined;”—and
being now just seated at breakfast,
the lovely Peggy busy in tea-cup
preparations,—

I began :—

“We shall now soon see the
“great city of London; was you
“never there before?”

(I will here speak in the first per-
son, to avoid *says he*, and *says she*.)

(*Patty*). “No! never, sir;—we
“came quite out of a distant part
“of Cumberland.”—(Here a soft
sigh heaved her gentle bosom.)

“But pray, ladies,”—

(*Peggy*.) “Pray, sir, don’t call us
“ladies!

"Ladies!—we are not *ladies*, indeed:

"—we are only two poor young

"girls, that are going to a friend in

"London to get us into some little

"industrious livelihood."

"Good!"—(thought I, holding my head down over my tea cup, to hide a ray of hope that then sparkled in my eye, to hear they were *poor girls*)—"Good!"—thought I again.

(Patty.) "We must do something, fir, to maintain ourselves, with such a family as our poor father has—and my mother but sickly; —we must, to be sure, try to do something."

"O no

“O no doubt — no doubt” —
 (said I, with a most sagacious countenance.) “You are both — both —
 “ greatly to be commended for
 “ your *pious* resolution ; — I love
 “ such *virtuous* resolves in young
 “ folks, it looks well : — and what,
 “ — what profession, pray, is your
 “ father ?”

(Peggy.) “In the church, sir, —
 “ but only a *poor curate* : — he might,
 “ for his great learning, as I have
 “ heard, be a bishop ; — but what
 “ signifies learning, with only thirty
 “ pounds a year — and such a family
 “ of children !”

I drew my chair closer, to join in
 this

this interesting conversation,—and began bitterly inveighing against the rich *clergy*, for oppressing the lower order of that class.—“What a shame” (said I, shaking my head) “that merit, such as you describe your father’s to be, should go unrewarded! — *Poor, good man!*—he must have a hard matter to bring the year round with such a paltry income—and in these *sad—sad times*—every article of life so dear.—Poor man!” sighed I.

O how the ‘sweet girls’ eyes sparkled with pleasure, to hear their
 3 parent

parent spoken of with respect and pity!—

“ You are *very—very good*, fir,”
—(said they both, with the smiles of an angel.)

I thought my *conscience* (I think the parsons call it) had been long ago seared with a red-hot iron—but on hearing from such lips,—“ You
“ are *very—very good*, fir,” I felt a plaguy *twinge*.—

“ Your *poor* mother sickly too”
—(said I in a most pitying tone)
“ —that is another expensive article.”—I feigned here a long heigh-ho!—

Here

Here I was offered by Peggy *sugar* for my tea ;—and Patty hoped my *toast* was to my liking :—one took my dish to fill ; the other too was equally attentive to oblige me :—such favour had my pity for the sufferings of their parents excited in their grateful bosoms.

“ And pray ” — (said I, after a pause) “ are you both the eldest of the family — have you no brother ? ” —

(Peggy.) “ O yes — yes, sir, we have a brother — several years older than us, who has been many years in the East Indies ; — but he is now expected in
VOL. I. G “ England

“ England every day — nay, he
 “ may be come by this time :—he
 “ is a good young man—he will
 “ be a comfort to us all, I hope ;
 “ —has made a pretty fortune, I
 “ hear : — Oh how I long to see
 “ him !—nay, I should not know
 “ him, for I was but five years old
 “ when he went to the Indies—he
 “ then was but twelve : — poor
 “ George Summers !”

Whilst the charming girl was
 making the above *artless* speech—
 the devil (I thank him) put *such* a
 thought in my head, that I in an ex-
 tacy embraced it.—Peggy had said
 she should not *know* this brother ;
 —what

—what then prevented me from instantly personating him? — Your lordship sees at once the *richness* of the invention;—and that it is a plan worth the revenue of ten eastern nabobs:—at once—at least for the present (hang the future) it would throw these unsuspicious innocents under my protection—my *pretended* care:—the moment, then, Peggy had sweetly pronounced the name of “poor George Summers!” — I started from my chair—“My God!” (exclaimed I) —“George Summers!—is it possible? — A brother just come from the East Indies! say you?”

“ —Oh heavens ! can—can it be ?

“ O Peggy — Patty ! my dear—

“ dear sisters — I am your brother

“ —your long-expected brother :

“ —my poor father in Cumberland,

“ I was hastening to thee—but—

“ Oh my sisters !—my sisters !”—

On saying this I sprang forward,
and caught them in my arms ; (O
my lord ! what a moment was *that* !)

—they received my embrace with
joyful surprize ;—nor had they, it
is plain, the least idea of a decep-
tion :—“ Good God !” (they both
exclaimed, whilst still encircled as
they thought in the arms of their
long-lost brother, — and whilst I

was

was imprinting a hundred kisses on their *unpolluted*, rosy lips and blooming cheeks) “Good God!” (they both with uplifted hands exclaimed) “what a *wonderful* happiness is this!—But *when* did you arrive?—*when* did you quit your ship?”—was echoed from each.—“Come, my dear George,” (said Patty) “let us sit down, and tell us all about it.—Well!—it is amazing to think that we should meet thus!”—The sweetly feminine and tender Peggy took out her little pocket handkerchief, and began weeping plentifully—the joyful surprize having been too

much for her spirits : — “ O, my
 “ poor father, if you could but
 “ know” (said she) “ this joyful
 “ meeting, what heart-felt comfort
 “ would it be !” — I took now out
 my own handkerchief, and held it
 to my eyes for a few moments —
 whilst I sobbed out — “ the dear
 “ man ! — Are the *children* all
 “ well ? — O my mother ! — never
 “ shall I forget that morning when
 “ you parted from your George.”
 — “ But,” said Patty, (the question
 was pertinent) “ as you was tra-
 “ velling so near Carlisle (for to be
 “ sure, I take it for granted you
 “ came into Cumberland to go to
 “ *Ashdale*

“ *Ashdale* to see us) how came you
 “ to return so soon back again to
 “ London, without *seeing our fa-*
 “ *ther?*” — “ Ah ! my dear,” (al-
 ways ready, my lord, at invention)
 “ you shall hear how that matter
 “ happened :—I arrived in Eng-
 “ land but seven days ago ; — and
 “ was in such haste to see my ho-
 “ noured parents, and *all of you,*
 “ that I flew down on the wings of
 “ duty, and was got as far as where
 “ you saw me taken into the coach,
 “ some miles on this side Carlisle,
 “ hoping to see sweet *Ashdale*” —
 (I was glad I had learned the name
 of their village) — “ in two days at-

“ farthest; when a thought struck
 “ me, a five hundred pound bank
 “ note I had brought for my fa-
 “ ther”—(here the sweet girls both
 lifted up their eyes to heaven, as if
 blessing me for my filial piety)—
 “ a bank note, I say, I had brought
 “ for my father, I had desired a
 “ gentleman to get me cash for at
 “ Carlisle, thinking it would be
 “ more convenient :—but this gen-
 “ tleman, who left London only
 “ one day after myself, kindly in-
 “ formed me, if I did not instantly
 “ return to London, the Custom-
 “ house officers would seize and
 “ make sad work with my bag-
 “ gage;

“ gage; and that my immediate
 “ presence was absolutely neces-
 “ sary: he blamed me for setting
 “ out in so much haste for the
 “ North, till I had finished about
 “ my baggage being landed:—but
 “ my impatience to see my dear
 “ parents got the better of every
 “ thing. — After some little talk
 “ with this gentleman, he said, as
 “ my father knew not I was arrived
 “ in England, it could be no dis-
 “ appointment to him:—we then
 “ fixed that I should return in-
 “ stantly to London, settle these
 “ troublesome matters, about my
 “ effects, with the Custom-house
 “ officers,

“ officers,—and next week I fully
 “ purposed to set off once more for
 “ *dear* Cumberland, as my impa-
 “ tience to see my beloved parents
 “ exceeds all things. — Thus, my
 “ sisters, have I now informed you
 “ the *exact state* of the case:—our
 “ meeting now, you know, was
 “ surely the greatest joy, and most
 “ unlooked - for accident in the
 “ world.”—I held a hand of each
 of these poor *simple* innocents in
 mine, during the above improbable
 stuff of Custom-house officers—my
 landing my effects, baggage, &c.:
 all which these unsuspecting girls
 believed as so much gospel, and
 even

even said, I was *quite right* in what I did as to returning to London:—

“ And O, how happy is it,” (said Peggy, clasping her hands) “ that

“ we have got such a kind *pro-*

“ *tektor*, such a *guard* to take care

“ of us, as *our brother!*” — Your

lordship knows, my *conscience*, as I

before observed, is pretty well *sear-*

ed, otherwise there was *something* in

the above speech that would have

touched it.—“ But,” (said I) “ my

“ dear sisters, tell me how all the

“ good folks our neighbours do at

“ *Ashdale*”—(I wanted, my lord,

to hear a few *names* there) —

“ All pure well,” — (said Patty)

“ Don’t

“Don’t you remember, brother,
 “Emma Harvey at Moss Hill, in
 “the next village?—she often used
 “to play with us, if you recol-
 “lect;”—“What,” (interrupted I)
 “my little Emma!—I used to call
 “her my wife—aye—many a game
 “at blindman’s buff have we had
 “together:—she was a pretty
 “girl!”—“She is the beauty of
 “Cumberland;” (said Peggy) “*so*
 “*modest*—and *so good*!—she is Pat-
 “ty’s and my only *intimate*.”——
 They then began (poor innocents!)
 to say how much I *resembled their*
father—“Setting aside,” (said the
 youngest charmer) “the great dif-
 “ference

"ference of *age*." — "But you
 "have my *mother's eyes*," — (said
 Peggy) — "and my brother Tom-
 "my's features to a *nicety*! — Well!
 "good God, how *happy* is it we
 "should meet thus! — Little —
 "little could I think we had a
 "brother in the coach with us
 "all day yesterday." — Here I
 looked mysteriously wise — and
 began a grave speech about the
 wonder - working hand of *Provi-*
dence — and a few more moral scraps
 I had picked up in former days
 out of Seneca. — But say, my dear
 "girls," (continued I) "to whom
 "are you going in London — to —
 "to"

“to”—(this was *every thing* for me to know)—“Why, to our cousin’s—our cousin Bennet;”—(said Peggy) “O aye!”—(returned I) “what a stupid head have I!—she “lives in”—(here I was taken with a fit of coughing) “she lives “in—in—I remember her formerly—she lives in”——“In “Hatton-street,” (said Patty, pulling out of her pocket a little bit of paper)—I *greedily* cast my eye over it, and read, “N° 2, Hatton-street, “Holborn:” (*this was quite enough for me.*)

“What!” (said Peggy) “did “you not call upon her on your

“arrival in town?” — the question was proper;—these girls, my lord, want not good understandings—it is their extreme simplicity, and ignorance of the world and its ways, that will render them so *easy a prey*: they are as ignorant of life as a young wild American bred in a cave—so much the better for your lordship.—But now to business;—my plan is this:—Mother H - - -, in B - - - court, shall personate this cousin Bennet of theirs, which she will do admirably well: and in the course of this day I have gathered, there are two daughters of the above lady — these poor innocents
having

having been talking of their cousins
 Sophy and Charlotte : — now, my
 good lord, Sally Winter and Jenny
 Wilmot (two demure-looking girls)
 shall be the *Miss Bennets* to a tittle.
 — The moment I arrive in London,
 having safely left *my sisters* at the
 inn where the coach sets up (which
 is a very creditable one) I shall
 whip away in a hack to our *mo-*
ther's, and give her full and parti-
 cular directions how to *look*—how
 to *speak*, (for with all the girls igno-
 rance we must be d---l--sh *circum-*
spect) and how to manage in all
 things relative to this important mat-
 ter : — *important* your lordship will
 say

say it is ;—as I will be bold to say, two such perfect master-pieces of beauty (in *different styles*) were never seen in London before.—

When we got into the coach after breakfast, nothing could be more easy, and more happy, than these two unsuspecting angels throughout the day :—the *nearness* of my relationship gives me infinite advantages.—When we stopped to dine, after I had given each a *brotherly kiss*—and oh ! with what kind of *chastened rapture* did they again receive it—Peggy said, she thought the least *we* could do would be to sit down at the inn there, and

write a letter to her poor father and mother, to acquaint them with the joyful *unexpected meeting* of *each* other on the road :—" *We* will all " three of us write in one letter ;" (said the *sweet* girl)—I had like to have been d---l---shly puzzled how to get *off* this matter, as I certainly could find no plausible excuse not to write to *my parents* on such an occasion ; however, my *admirable* presence of mind befriended me. —" My dear girls," (returned I) " they have by this time undoubtedly got my long letter I wrote them from Carlisle the day before I met with you ;" — (this they

they could not *disprove*) — “ but
 “ with all my heart and soul I will
 “ write again ;—I will ring the bell
 “ for paper — no — I think I will
 “ go into the bar to order some-
 “ thing more for dinner, and there
 “ I will scratch a few lines in a
 “ moment—we have not time now
 “ *for all of us* to write: What have
 “ you to say ?”—“ Only our duty
 “ and love: and pray tell them
 “ we will write the moment we get
 “ to our cousin Bennet’s.”—Poor
 innocents ! (thought I)—starting up
 in great haste, and looking at my
 watch—“ Good God ! it is now two
 “ o’clock—but I will just write a

“line to *our dear parents*.”—Away I ran into the bar, where having chatted a quarter of an hour with the landlady (by the bye, a very pretty woman) in which time I judged it would be *supposed* a decent letter *might be* written, I returned to the girls:—“Have you wrote?” (said they)—“Yes, and sealed and sent it to the post,” (replied I)—“Well, that is clever!” (said they, in high good-humour). — I now began a little romping, which the freedom of brother and sisters might authorize:—“My dear girls,” (said I, tucking the profusion of their fine hair under their little round-

round-eared caps) “ all this hair,
 “ —this *shining* hair, your cousin
 “ Bennet, when you get to Lon-
 “ don, will, I dare say, have *dress-*
 “ *ed.*” — “ Dressed !” (said Patty,
 innocently staring) — “ we are not
 “ going to set up, brother, for fine
 “ ladies,—we hope to get into a
 “ service.” — “ So you will, my
 “ dears, I doubt not,”—(replied I,
 with great gravity)—If there is
 any thing I *value myself* on, it is, my
 lord, on my perfect *command of face* :
 indeed, your lordship has often com-
 plimented *me* so far as to say, THAT
perfection would entitle me *to shine*
on the stage.

But to be brief :—At Northampton we are now arrived ; and heartily glad am I that I have so gloriously brought my *admirable* plan to bear, with no other coach passengers being present ; which would infallibly have ruined my *palming* myself upon these simple angels for a *brother*, as there are few people who *know the world* but would have seen through the *deception* : and lucky is it that I have finished this interesting business — (*finished* I may say, for these girls are now my property to all intents and purposes)—lucky too it is, for it seems to-morrow morning, here, we are to take up
a parson ;

a *parson*;—plague take him; he will be a d----d bar upon me and all my actions:—I had a view of him just now, in the bar — and I see he appears quite sensible and *shrewd* — a queer *putt*, I doubt not:—I shall be cautious how I behave to these simple innocents *before him*; but my relationship of *brother* will still give me many, and indeed the greatest advantages. O, my dear lord, what glorious schemes shall I bring to bear by this deception!—already have I got the girls into my possession;—and to-morrow night they shall be safely lodged at mother H----'s. — Your lordship sees, I

doubt not, the *richness* of my *contrivance*:—besides an hundred other advantages I have gained by it (and all for *the sake of your lordship*) not a single letter shall either *pass from* them or their friends—as I shall, out of extreme *tendernefs* for my dear sisters, be so *kind* to take upon me the *care* of their letters to the post; and likewise constantly enquire *for* letters at the post-office for them, which I will take *care* they shall——never have.——

You may be certain, my good lord——I had just got so far, when accidentally casting my eyes on a news-paper, I see your lordship is

now

now set out for Newmarket—I
am sorry for this.—But why sorry?
—no human being shall see these
divine creatures—(no man, I mean)
till they are presented to you.

I will write again when arrived
in London; being anxious to prove
with what *zeal* and indefatigable
industry I remain

Your lordship's

most obsequious,

and devoted servant,

Patrick Jackall.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

*Captain Jackall to Lord Racket, at
Newmarket.*

London,
B— Court, ———'s-street.

MY DEAR LORD,

AT length I safely lodged my
fair *northern* lasses at our good
mother's, last night, about eight
o'clock.—

As I may, *without vanity*, sup-
pose my descriptive narrations will
be some little entertainment, I pro-
ceed to say, that the stage-coach
drove us to the inn of its destina-
tion

tion by four in the afternoon:—
 (by the way, I liked not the *plaguy*
parson,—he observed me with a very
scrutinizing eye;—I shammed sleep
 the chief part of the way, to avoid
 being asked impertinent questions.)
 —I did not, however, at the inn
 where we dined, *abate* at all in my
 assiduities to my *sisters*, or in any
 part of my tender behaviour to
 them; as, if I *had*, would it not
 have appeared strange to *these girls*,
 that the company of a *third person*
 should *alter* my conduct towards
 them?—This might have awakened
suspicion, even in the bosom of *sim-*
plicity itself:—the *minutiae*—the *mi-*
nutiae,

nutiæ, my lord, is what is always to be regarded—and is what I *chiefly* value *myself* upon.

When we arrived at our inn in London, (and had got rid of the parson) I conducted my ladies, with all the *careful assiduity* of a brother *indeed*, to the landlady, a respectable woman.

“ —Madam (said I) to your care I
 “ commit these young ladies till I
 “ return ; which will be in the even-
 “ ing :—they are strangers in Lon-
 “ don, therefore I particularly beg
 “ they may remain with you.”—She
 promised they should :—indeed, my
 lord, I would not for the world, so
 young, so beautiful as they are, have
 left

left them without this caution. I flung myself into a hack, and flew to mother H-----'s:—she, good woman, enter'd at once into the *richness* of my plan, and assured me she would try to *be* Mrs. Bennet to a *tit-tle*; and that Jenny Wilmot and Sally Winter should take upon them to personate the Miss Bennets: and that a quiet, handsome apartment should be allotted the sisters. When I mentioned your lordship's *name* on this occasion, the good woman said, “No more, no more, dear captain—rest satisfied—every thing shall be conducted in the most *handsome* manner; for what is it I would not do
“ for

“for that *best* of noblemen?” (mean-
your lordship.) She assured me, she
would *pawn* her *honour* no *man* should
see, or even have the least glimpse of
them.

“For a day or two,” said I, “my
“dear Mrs. H-----, let your *other*
“nymphs not appear, at least not in
“your parlour, where these lovely
“girls will dine.”—“They shall
“remain (returned she) in the other
“apartments:—but, dear captain, if
“you meant, that perhaps the *dress*
“of some of my ladies might ap-
“pear *odd* to strangers, bred in the
“country,—be assured, no women
“can dress more *modestly* than they
“do.

“do.—I thought you knew,” (said she, laughing) “that since ladies of
 “character, your *modest* ones, I mean,
 “have chose to dress themselves *like*
 “women of the town, and as *fantas-*
 “*tically* as so many stage-dancers—
 “women of the town *now* dress in
 “the most modest style imaginable :
 “—you, captain, a man of pleasure,
 “and not know this !”

Having settled all matters with the old beldam, away I flew for my girls :—with what rapture did I hand them into a hackney-coach !—and how would your admirers of *nature* and beautiful simplicity, have been delighted with the artless wonder each

each charmer expressed, at the new scenes in the principal streets thro' which we drove:—"Look, Peggy, "at that fine house!"—and, "See, "Patty, that grand building!"—then were they both wishing their little brothers and sisters in Cumberland could see all these fine things. At length we arrived at the *destined* house; into which, with secret rapture, I handed them:—at the door of a handsome parlour stood the *fictitious Mrs. Bennet*, (O my lord! you would have died to have seen how inimitably she *topp'd her part*, and how she bent her *stiff fat arms*, to clasp to her *sincere* bosom the beloved children of her kinsman)

kinsman.) "Welcome, welcome, my
 "dear cousins" (said she) tenderly
 kissing the cheek of both—the dear
 innocents returned her embrace with
 the most genuine marks of respect
 and gratitude, and with the greatest
 air of humility, as much as to say,
 "we are overcome with your good-
 "ness."—

Here I must say, as I had told
 the girls, when I left them at the inn,
 I was going to Mrs. Bennet's, it
 must be imagined her and my mu-
 tual joy, on our first meeting on my
 arrival in *England*, made that subject
 now, on my appearance with my *sis-
 ters*, needless.—Your lordship will

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I

suppose

suppose I told the mother every thing relative to the whole family at Ashdale in Cumberland, &c.—Long as this good woman has been conversant with beauty, and often with *uncorrupted* innocence, yet so much was she struck with the amazing loveliness of these girls, that she could not forbear turning round to me, and suddenly exclaiming, “Good God!” luckily they heard her not, and we sat down.—A number of kind questions were asked by the feigned Mrs. Bennet; as, How her dear old friend Mrs. Summers look’d? and how her kinsman did after his late illness?—

“And how many little brothers and

“ sisters have you ?—I forget their
 “ names”—(said this *excellent* wo-
 man).—“ Mr. Bennet, my spouse”
 (continued she) “ is gone to-day
 “ down into the country ; but he will
 “ rejoice, on his arrival, to find you
 “ both here—and how lucky was
 “ it to meet your dear brother on
 “ the road !—Well ! the wonderful
 “ works of Providence !”—To
 all this conversation, the sweet girls
 made modest and suitable answers ;
 but their *timidity* was so great (un-
 used to being in company) that they
 had seated themselves almost on the
corner of their chairs, as if not chus-
 ing to *take up any room*.—The lady of

the house now rang for tea ; and now entered the supposed Miss Bennets ; —both Jenny Winter and Sally Wilmot had indeed filled their parts ; they enter'd with the chaste air of two *vestals* ; —not a bit of *rouge* on their cheeks ; not one dust of powder in their hair ; —their dress, plaited round caps, and *brown* lutestring night-gowns : —two such demure looking prudes I never saw ; I hardly knew them : —but an *arch* look they gave me (privately) obliged me to take out my pocket handkerchief, to stop my mouth, lest their very puritanical appearance should cause me to laugh outright.

They

They entered each with their work in their hands ; and with great modesty saluted their cousins, and welcomed them to London, &c.—I began admiring their works—“Surely (said I) “ *cousin Bennet*, this will hurt their “ eyes.”—“O, no (replied she) I “ must have them always employ’d “ —*innocently employed* : young folks “ must not be idle,” said the old veteran.—Here she cast a look at the two sweet angels, who seemed, by their approving blushes, to think she spoke like an oracle.—“After all “ your English works of the needle “ (said I) you can none of you come “ up to *our* East India manufac-
I 3 “ tures ;

"tures; the rich embroidery we
 "have in Bengal, is beautiful in-
 "deed."—I was then asked by my
 young cousins (the Bennets) a num-
 ber of questions, concerning the
 manners, customs, &c. &c. of the
 inhabitants of Bengal; all which I
 answered with my usual *ease* and *faci-*
lity of invention; and with as much
effrontery, some *rude* folks would say,
 as if I had been all my life there.
 Our sweet *rustics* behaved with the
 utmost humility; and appeared over-
 whelmed with the civilities bestowed
 by all present. A very genteel sup-
 per was provided, and every thing
 conducted in the most *decent, quiet*
 manner

manner imaginable :—what the old beldam had done with all her nymphs (for not the sound of a female voice did I hear) I cannot conceive.—My lovely *sisters* now complained of being in want of rest after their journey. The good lady of the house would herself conduct them to their apartment, which she assured these poor innocents was *perfectly* air'd. I, under the character of a fond *brother*, faunter'd into the room with them, when, after taking a kiss of each, and saying I would convey a letter to the general post-office the next day for them (as I must be obliged to go into the city on account of the

cursed business of my East India affairs) I retired with *madam Bennet*, and her *two daughters*; and we sat over a bowl of arrack punch till two this morning;—they were in absolute raptures with my acquisition: —“Upon my soul (said the mother) I hope my good lord will come to town soon, for I am obliged to put such a cursed restraint on my tongue, that I don’t know how I shall be able to hold out for a week, under such a constraint: I was once or twice, forgetting my feign’d character, on the point of rapping out a broad *oath*; but I gave a great gulp, as lady Townly says in the play, and *swallowed*

lowed it down." Jenny and Sally both declared they should be soon tired of acting *modest* ladies; though they said they believed it was *often* only an *assumed* character:—"What eyes (said they) has that Patty—" and what lips has Peggy!"—"I envy them their bloom" (said the malicious Sally) "more than any thing, as they have not the trouble of *rouging* :—well, well, they will soon be *brought down* to our level, however, that is *some* comfort."—

We then, my lord, settled a *plan* for the above *desirable* end: we apprehend some little *art* must be used; the common ways of seduction will
never

never do with girls like these, bred up under an old parson, who has given them a set of notions as strict and starched as those of Rachel and Rebekah, in that old-fashioned book called the Bible.—We have laid a *pretty scheme*, which cannot fail of success.

Saturday noon.

I have just called, this morning, on the lovely girls; they look more beautiful than ever, after having recovered the fatigue of their journey; and what joy was lighted up in their enchanting eyes on the appearance of their *brother*!—"Dear George" (said Peggy) we have wrote to
 "our

“our parents.”—“Give me the letter (said I) to put in the post.”—
 I retir’d with it to my lodgings; and, as it will be necessary that a letter should go from them on their arrival in town, to satisfy the old doating fools in the country that they are safe, on opening and reading their epistle I found it would be the very thing; that is (as I defy any man living to excel me in a *forgery*) to carefully copy all they say concerning their kind reception at Mrs. Bennet’s, and as carefully to *suit* every sentence relative to the finding their dear brother on the road, of which they give the most circumstantial

stantial account, and speak of me in the highest terms of *sisterly* affection.—I have accordingly *extracted* from their letter just what served my purpose, in their own artless words; and so exactly have I *forged* their hand-writing, that I defy the world to *detect* me.—Your lordship will here say—“ But will not the “ *real* Mrs. Bennet write down to “ Ashdale, to express her surprize “ her cousins are not yet arrived ?” —*Good*, my lord, and *pertinent* is the question : to which I answer, —“ If “ she does, I hope and believe your “ affair with these lovely innocents “ will be so far *finished* by that time “ (as

“ (as it will nearly take up a fortnight in answers backward and forward into Cumberland) that it will be of mighty small consequence to a man of your lordship’s high rank in life, what this pious old parson, his wife, or *their* cousin Bennet, can say or do on this occasion.”

This instant I am abruptly call’d away to White’s, to meet Sir Harry Ranter, and a few more of the set; therefore must beg leave to conclude with assuring your lordship I am, most inviolably,

your ever devoted servant,

to all intents and purposes,

Patrick Jackall.

P. S.

P. S. I enclose a copy of the *innocents'* letter to their parents, as *properly altered* by myself: it may serve to *amuse* your lordship, and give an idea of that simplicity (for I have altered nothing but what relates to finding their *brother*) which, I apprehend, added to the extreme beauty of these girls, will give an *impatience* to behold them; — and I hope, before the week is over, they may be in your lordship's arms: a “*consummation devoutly to be wished*,” — as Hamlet says, on another occasion.

LET-

LETTER X.

*Peggy and Patty Summers to Mr. and
Mrs. Summers,
(as altered by Captain Jackall.)*

London, Hatton Street.

OUR DEAR AND HONOUR'D PARENTS,

AFTER a very safe and pleasant journey, we are got, blessed be Heaven! to the house of our kind and dear cousin, Mrs. Bennet; and tho' in a fine handsome bedchamber, just going to bed, yet we will not sleep till we have paid our duty and affection to our beloved father and mother. We hope you have ceased your
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grief

grief on our departure, as it is impossible for words to express the tender kindness of this excellent relation, Mrs. Bennet : — she behaves to us of all the world as if we were *ladies indeed*. We have reason to bless the day that we left Ashdale ; for I am sure we are *made now* for ever.—O what a regard has this excellent woman for my dear parents ! she even shed tears when I mentioned your sufferings last winter.—You cannot imagine what a handsome manner she lives in ;—I never saw such a supper in my life ;—but you will say, two such poor *novices* as we are in the world, have as yet seen nothing.

nothing. Mr. Bennet is, it seems, gone into the country, but will soon return. — My two amiable young cousins, Sophia and Charlotte, are both at home; they are sweet young ladies; so affable, so kind, and not one bit of pride belonging to them! — 'tis impossible to tell you how very *good* they are to us; Patty and I shall love them greatly: but pray tell our dear old friend, Emma Harvey, not to be *jealous*, for she will always be the *first* in our esteem and tenderest affection. My cousins are very pretty, quite beauties in our eyes, and drest so neat! — very curious needle women, I find; — they

are so very kind to say, they will shew us some new patterns of fashionable works ; is not this very kind ?
 —Dear sirs ! what a fine place this London is ! we seem both of us quite amazed at all we see and hear ; and shall be still more so, as our cousin Bennet *herself* says she will shew us all the fine sights in London ;
 —I suppose she means St. Paul's, the Tower, &c.—there's for ye !—
 I am sure we never can make her amends for her great goodness.—
 We have no doubt but that she will be as kind to my little sister Nancy, when she is big enough to come to London ;—nay, she as good as said
 she

she would ; and asked how old she was. I dare say Mr. Bennet must have a great fortune, by every thing being so handsome in the house ; fine china and plate ! — Dear sirs ! how abash'd was Patty and I last night at supper ! — a fine supper, my dear parents, enough to serve us in the country for a whole week for *dinners* : — Patty thought a dish near her was eggs, and I desired her to give me one ; but, dear heart ! how was I *dash'd*, (I might have been struck down with a feather) when my cousin Charlotte seemed to smile, and said they were not eggs, but — a *French* hard word she named.

We have a very handsome large bedchamber allotted us ; a 'bible and prayer-book, and Nelson's Fasts and Festivals, we found lying on the table. Pray, my dear parents, do not imagine our being in London will make us forget our *devotional* duties ; which, be assured, we shall as strictly perform as at Ashdale, where my honoured father read the service, morning and evening, with all us his children kneeling round him.

I make no doubt but we shall soon get into some pretty genteel establishment, so as to be able to earn our livelihood : — and O how happy

happy shall Patty and I be, to send down, every year, some handsome *present* for my little sisters, and my dear *mother* (I should *first* have said.)

—My cousin Bennet desires I would present her kindest love to you both, and her best wishes for all happiness to attend you. We brought the little pot of honey safe, and she returns many thanks for it, and thinks it the finest she ever saw; I told her it was the produce of our little garden at Ashdale.—Pray tell Emma Harvey we will write very soon to her.

We now conclude, with duty to

K 3

your

your honoured selves, and love to all
the children, ever

your most affectionate,
dutiful daughters,

Peggy and Patty Summers.

THESE poor, unfortunate sisters wrote the next day to their beloved friend, Emma Harvey ; which they gave innocently to the vile wretch who personated their brother :—he at once took an opportunity of committing it to the flames, not chusing to give himself the trouble of altering a long part of it, relative to their joy in meeting *their brother* on the road ;—but assured the poor innocent victims, that he had put the letter

letter into the post with his *own* hands.

Here, gentle reader, with the most heart-felt anguish we must draw a veil over what passed at the house of the infamous woman who had the audacity to personate Mrs. Bennet: for some few days, till the arrival of the vile lord Racket in town, she maintained her feigned character so artfully, that even ladies more experienced in the world than these *simple* lovely maids, might have been easily deceived. The abominable Jackall, till the arrival of his lordship, visited them daily: under the villainy of his assumed character, he

took several (though innocent) liberties; often introduced discourses of the love and gallantry of his East Indian friends; and endeavoured to find how far their sentiments on *virtue* had been improved:—but found them, by the *general* tenour of their discourse (he had most artfully introduced the subject) to have *notions* of the most *inflexible* kind, in that particular: these notions he as highly extolled to the skies; as did also his shocking associates in vice, Sally and Jenny.

At length, in about five days, the vile lord Racket arrived in London from his Newmarket expedition: he

was

was immediately (being all impatience to see his *prey*) introduced to them as a particular friend of their supposed brother, who came over from India in the same ship with him.—But here, we repeat, a veil must be drawn over what passed.—In the first place, we shall not stain our spotless page with the horrid transactions of a brothel;—and in the next, we should chuse to avoid a repetition, so frequently made use of in modern novels, of bombast speeches, and all the amorous nonsense rehearsed on these occasions by men of intrigue, to gain their views on the young, the credulous, and inexperienced:

experienced :—suffice it to say, that here every infamous *art* was practised—and that, by the aid of the most *bellish potions*, and *brutal force*, these poor innocents became the miserable victims of the worst passion of the vilest of libertines.—

——— “ Ev’n Pity’s *self* must weep
“ At *such* a sacrifice !”

Reader, whoever thou art, Reader, disdain not the tribute of a tear for *ruined* innocence, and that by *arts* which shock humanity to relate !——

These miserable victims, on their recovery from their *stupor* (which
the

the horrid drugs which had been administered had occasioned) fell into a strong delirium, on the knowledge of the shocking outrage they had sustained :—they raved incessantly for their *brother George*.—

“Where—where is he?” (said they alternately—still, poor, poor girls, believing the impious wretch who personated him to be their *identical* brother) “Our brother, our
“dear brother,” (said they) “will
“revenge this!—Let us crawl, my
“sister, upon our hands and knees
“to Ashdale, and in our poor mother’s bosom bury all our griefs!
“No—no!—she never will receive

“us;”

“ us ;—we are polluted—stained !

“ — Where, where are you, my

“ Emma Harvey ? Robed in spot-

“ less innocence, you are an an-

“ gel of light, and *spurn* us from

“ you !”——Then would these pi-

tiable unfortunates fall into such

dreadful fits of phrenzy, that the

infamous woman (at whose house

they still were) declared she was

fearful they would lay violent hands

on themselves, and that her *poor*

house would be a scene of murder.

“ In my life ” (the wretch exclaim-

ed) “ never did I hear girls make

“ such a fuss ;—and for what ?

“ because a fine, young, rich, and

“ accomplished

“ accomplished nobleman has shewn
 “ them favour !—and all this from
 “ their ridiculous starched educa-
 “ tion of virtue.—Virtue, forsooth !
 “ will it (as what’s his name says
 “ in the play) will it buy a new
 “ garment ? — will it purchase a
 “ good dinner ?—or procure a place
 “ in the side-box at the opera ?—
 “ *Tattered* virtue may walk on foot,
 “ I believe, all its days, for any
 “ reward it will meet with in this
 “ world.—And who lives so grand
 “ as a *kept lady* ?—how infinitely is
 “ her situation to be preferred to a
 “ poor devil of a wife ! to whom
 “ all the *bickerings* are reserved of a
 “ discontented.

" discontented husband. — Not so
 " the kind *keeper* ; he meets his be-
 " loved girl with smiles and rap-
 " ture. — Who dresses so elegant-
 " ly as a *kept lady* ? who is sur-
 " rounded with greater elegancies
 " of life ? with more servants, jew-
 " els, toys, and trinkets—in short,
 " with every thing that can make
 " life desirable ?—I have had your
 " *squamous, troublesome* girls before
 " now, but these northern lasses
 " are beyond all sufferance :—'tis
 " to be hoped his lordship will
 " make me ample *recompence*, as
 " *even* the business of my pains-
 " taking avocation (set this tire-

“some *job* out of the question)
 “has been hindered in some mea-
 “sure.”——Thus did this *scan-*
dal to her sex, and to human na-
 ture, exclaim to her nymphs.—At
 length the miserable sisters were, by
 the orders of their vile seducer, re-
 moved ;—(still in a distracted state,
 sometimes raving, sometimes mo-
 ping, and often in a senseless stupor.)
 —They were privately conveyed
 to some very handsome apartments,
 in a private street, provided for them;
 —where we will leave them for
 the present, just to enquire after the
 good folks in Cumberland.

The letter which poor Peggy had
 written,

written, or rather that which the infamous wretch (the feigned brother) had *forged* for that unsuspecting innocent, was received at Ashdale with the utmost joy and transport.—With what fond delight did the enraptured parents *devour* the contents!—to find their beloved children were treated with even a parental tenderness, which promised the most flattering success to their future advantageous settlement in life! — The little children hung round their delighted mother, whilst the tender tear of maternal joy glistened in her mild eye;—“ And indeed ! ” (cried the smiling innocents) “ *indeed,*

"*deed*, mamma, is *our* Peggy and

"Patty quite well, and got safe to

"London?" — "I thought, in-

"*deed*, — I thought" (said the
poor deceived father) "our worthy

"cousin would receive them with

"*civility*—but you see, my dear,"

"(to his tender wife) "you see

"she is as *kind* as even *yourself*

"could be!"——

! (Ah! poor deluded parents!—

little did you imagine, at that dread-

ful period, your lovely, precious

children, spotless when they left

you as the unstained lily, were now

the miserable victims of unbridled

lust, in an infamous brothel:—little,

Vol. I. L. alas!

alas ! did you imagine, even at the moment that ye were rejoicing at the happy ideas of their security and future felicity, that they were then under the horrid influence of hellish potions, which occasioned a high delirium:—sometimes stimulating them to cry loudly for help ; at others depressing them with the most poignant despair, whenever a ray of reason intervened : for, alas ! no aid was nigh.)—

The neighbours now at Ashdale were called in to hear this *joyful* letter ; for Peggy and Patty were universally beloved in the little village, and the cottagers had expressed no small anxiety at the *wonderful*

derful distance London appeared to them:—they rejoiced (such is uncorrupted nature, till hackneyed in the ways of the world) at the happy situation of the beloved daughters of their common friend and father:—a cup of ale was fetched to regale them, and they all sat down on the green turf-bench, at the foot of a spreading oak, whilst the delighted parents pointed out afresh to the hearers every interesting sentence:—the fond mother was full of the praises of the Miss Bennets, in their offers of teaching her Peggy and Patty curious needleworks, &c.—whilst the father was equally pleased his

little garden had afforded him to send from his stock of bees, a present to Mrs. Benner, of so acceptable a kind as the pot of honey. How blind are poor deluded mortals!—but hold, my pen, let me not *lament* this *blindness*,—as perhaps this total ignorance of events, and of what passes (except before our eyes) is one of our happiest privileges in our present short state of existence. Had Mr. and Mrs. Summers not been in *ignorance* (wisely, however, are things *so* constituted, by the great Governor of the world) what must have been at this moment the distracted anguish of their tender hearts!

hearts ! — Misery — their children's everlasting misery in this life, would have appeared to them as unavoidable. — What wringing of hands, and bitter tears, would at this moment have ensued ! — Whilst this *present* little happy group were talking the joyous letter over, the good Mrs. Summers called her little boy ; “ Tommy,” (cried she) “ run, “ child, to Moss-Hill (a mile only) “ and tell Miss Emma we have had “ a letter from our dear Peggy and “ Patty, with *joyful news* in it.” — The little fellow flies like winged lightning, to impart the good tidings ; but in passing the wood to

Moss-Hill he met Miss Harvey, who having long been impatient to hear of her young friends, was taking a sweet evening's walk to Ashdale, but on the way had seated herself on the stile, which so often had been the appointed place of meeting of this young and lovely triumvirate.—Peggy and Patty had planted a few flowering shrubs round a kind of rustic arbour, entwined with eglantines and woodbines, in remembrance of the favourite spot: in this sweet retreat the faithful Emma often spent an evening hour;—she cultivated the little wild parterre with her own hands.

hands. — “Ye drooping roses,”
 (cried she) “why hang your bend-
 ing sweets!”—they were (though she
 knew it not) at that moment an
 emblem of their languid, lovely
 owners. The little boy from Ash-
 dale having imparted his glad tid-
 ings, it may easily be imagined with
 what joy the delighted Emma haf-
 tened to Ashdale, and with what
 heart-felt happiness she perused the
felicitous epistle of her beloved
 friends. “Ah!” (said she, laugh-
 ing) “idle girls, not one line have
 “they yet sent me!—A London
 “journey, I fear, will make them
 “forget their poor Emma.”—

Alas! she knew not the miserable sufferers *had* written as before-mentioned; and that the vilest of men had destroyed the letter.

Miss Harvey sincerely rejoiced in what she, like the rest of these worthy, deceived people, thought good news. This excellent young lady, besides the loss of her Peggy and Patty, had sustained also the grief of parting with another very particular friend of hers from Cumberland; namely, Miss Waller; she being ten days already set out for Northamptonshire, to visit a near relation. The friendship of this amiable young lady had been of the
utmost

utmost service, as well as comfort, to the poor *brow-beat* Emma; whose rigid father (of whom mention has been already made, and will still more) had absolutely refused her acquiring any of the genteel accomplishments of life, thro' excess of avarice: he held the female sex in the most sovereign contempt, and hardly allowed his amiable wife (the pattern of patience, and who had brought him so good a fortune, that she had been the making of him) to be but just above *rationality*. This man (there are too many such) valued himself solely on what the *world* calls, being an *honest* man; that is, he

he certainly paid every tradesman his *own*; but as to any other virtue, was as ignorant of it as his horse:— he had, by dint of extreme parsimony, got a good fortune, which, for want of male heirs, he grieved must be tack'd to a *petticoat*. By his own will, the little Emma would never have been taught any thing, but just barely to *read*:—her tender mother had however privately taught her to *write*; and the accomplished Miss Waller had not only taught her singing and French, but had likewise lent her a great variety of books for some years, of the best and most elegant authors; and in short,

short, had taken no small pains in the cultivation of her mind, so that Emma Harvey was nearly, through great application, and an excellent understanding, as accomplished as her lovely friend. Miss Waller, herself, owed her advantages of education to an aunt, a lady in very genteel life, and who had not only given her niece a good, but also a very accomplished education.—Poor Emma looked *up* to her Lucy, as to an oracle; as did, in a lower degree, our unfortunate sisters to their Emma. The father of this oppressed young lady, was the least beloved by his neighbours of any man:—
merely

merely on account of being what *he* called an *honest man*, he behaved with such insolence, there was no enduring him :—he affected all that *bluntness* and *roughness* of manner, which by the *un-discerning* is called *honesty*; but it has no more to do with *honesty*, than *base cowardice* has with *gentleness* and true *meekness*. Shakespear has well delineated this sort of honest man, where he says,

“ ——— This is some fellow,
 “ Who having been prais’d for bluntness,
 “ doth affect
 “ A saucy roughness; and constrains the
 “ garb
 “ Quite from his nature.—He cannot
 “ flatter, he,
 “ An *honest mind*, and *plain*.——
 “ ——— These kind of *knaves* I know.”

Poor

Poor Mrs. Harvey had the general pity of the neighbourhood :—of late years, her tyrant seldom permitted her to stir abroad : once or twice in his life he had indulged her to go with him to the *assizes* at Carlisle ; but this he thought too great a favour to be repeated.—This gentleman having lately purchased some mines in an adjacent county, of a man, an old batchelor of large fortune, and who he understood wanted a wife, took it into his head, that his daughter Emma, then barely eighteen, would be the very wife for him :—as to ever marrying his daughter to any man, but merely for

money, he would just as soon have
 thought of marrying her to an ani-
 mal of a different species. What
 gave rise to this curious thought of
 Mr. Harvey, was, that when Mr.
 Branville (which was the name of
 this rich old batchelor) and he had
 settled the affair of the mines, the
 former (his heart being open over a
 glass of wine) began telling how ill
 his nephew had used him:—"A
 " young rogue, (added he) I have
 " a great mind to marry, and to get
 " an heir to my estate:—I am not
 " so old, Mr. Harvey, as you may
 " think."—"Old! (replied he)
 " what do ye talk of old? you are
 " barely,

“barely, sir, but fifty—what is
 “that?—why your very prime of
 “life.”——“Softly—softly—*good*
 “Mr. Harvey, I have been fifty,
 “(smiling) near twenty years—but
 “I *wear well*; and, seriously, could
 “I meet with a young, pretty girl
 “—she must be young and pretty,
 “Mr. Harvey — why — I don’t
 “know—but—Have you any Cum-
 “berland girls worth an old man’s
 “notice?”—(here he cut a capèr).
 —“Most worthy sir (said Mr.
 “Harvey, with great solemnity) I
 “have a daughter;—the girl is
 “handsome, nay, very handsome.”
 —“But how *old* is she?” (inter-
 rupted

rupted Mr. Branville).—"Turned
 " of eighteen (said the father)—tall
 " and strait, fair and blooming."—
 " That will just do," answered the
 other.—"If you like the *girl*," (said
 Mr. Harvey) "she shall be yours
 " at a word:—the honour of your
 " alliance, cannot admit of her be-
 " ing otherwise than all obedience
 " to my commands. If you will
 " favour me with your company to
 " dinner, one day next week, you
 " shall see her—she is, I repeat,
 " young and beautiful."—"Say no
 " more, say no more," (said our old
 lover) "you have transacted the af-
 " fair of the lead mines with so
 " much

“ much *honesty*, that I have no doubt
 “ but the affair of your daughter
 “ would be managed with equal
 “ honour, as to the bargain.”—After much curious conversation (which we shall not repeat) had passed on this subject, a promise was given by Mr. Harvey, he should have the *girl*, if he liked her:—her own consent and approbation being no more in the question, than if she had been a downright idiot, or an *inanimate* piece of parchment.

But now for a few words concerning Mr. Branville: He was a man, 'tis true, without vices, but without *virtues* too;—he possessed a clear estate of

three thousand pounds a year, with a great deal of ready money:—as to his person, he was a well-looking man, about seventy years of age; his dress most exactly neat and curious. No coat was ever so *brown*, no shoes ever so glossy *black*, or ruffles so formally *plaited*, as Mr. Branville's.—He was in general esteemed; and as he was guilty of *no vices*, as gaming, women, or drinking, he was always spoken of as a *good character*. — But where all this time were his virtues?

Mr. Harvey, after this day's important business, (of having bargained for the *lead-mines*, and his *daughter*) set out for Moss Hill, which

which was about fifty miles distance. He happened to return the very evening in which the gentle Emma had been to Mr. Summers's, on occasion of the letter from her beloved friends.

Whilst the poor innocent family at Ashdale were at present *lulled* with the comforts of believing their beloved daughters were in peace and security —(ah vain delusion!)—we will visit Moss Hill, where by this time Emma (having often stopped to listen to the nightingale, and as often to admire the beauty of the full moon, then rising, in Milton's beautiful language,

——“ in clouded majesty”——)

had

had arrived. Her father met her at the parlour-door, with a more *smirking* air than she had ever observed in him; — and, tapping her on the cheek, asked her if she would take a turn in the grass-walk, whilst supper was preparing: this unusual strain of *kindness* amazed Emma; — but what he said, or what she answered, will be found in the next letter, beginning the second volume.

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End of the First Volume.

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